



Leaders in Resource Renewal

A non-profit association that provides statewide proactive leadership on waste reduction and recycling through education, advocacy, collaboration, programs and services.

AROW Board of Directors- Legislative Position Paper

January 27, 2015

Wisconsin SB7/AB11-Relating to: the newspaper recycling fee and the recycled content of newsprint used in newspapers.

Associated Recyclers of Wisconsin (AROW) is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization that provides statewide proactive leadership on waste reduction and recycling through education, advocacy, collaboration, programs and services. AROW was established in 1994 by recycling professionals working from the public and private sector to implement Wisconsin's recycling law and to develop best management practices for the industry.

The AROW board of directors opposes SB7/AB11, a bill that would repeal the newspaper recycling fee and the recycled content of newsprint used in newspapers. The AROW board of directors opposes this bill for the following reasons:

- Wisconsin's recycling program, implemented at the local level, captures hundreds of thousands of tons of recyclables each year. These robust local programs serve as a significant source of recyclables for manufacturers who use recyclables in their manufacturing process.
- In support of the local programs, a Recycling Fee is charged at Wisconsin landfills. Of the approximate \$35 million collection by the state, \$20 million is provided to local programs to offset programming costs.
- For twenty-one years, AROW members have supported all efforts to increase recycling and to create markets for recyclable materials. Recyclable materials are used by state, regional and national manufacturers as raw feedstock to produce new goods. Their businesses are only successful when recycled-content goods are purchased.
- The mandate that publishers of newspapers use recycled content newsprint for its newspapers has been successful in developing those important markets.
- Given that Wisconsin Statute Chapter 287.31(4) provides for a number of exemptions from the mandate, publishers are able to avoid paying the fee for not meeting the target recycled content for a number of reasons, including financial hardship.
- The AROW board of directors is sympathetic to the challenges that small circulation publishers face. As such, it is suggested that Wisconsin Statute Chapter 287.31(4)(c) threshold for exemption from the fee of a publisher with a circulation of 20,000 be increased to a circulation of 40,000. This would capture a greater number of small publishers under the exemption and moderate the economic challenges they face.

Please feel free to contact AROW with questions about the above information.

Meleesa Johnson
President
715-446-4101 X104
meleesa.johnson@co.marathon.wi.us

Karin Sieg
Executive Director
715-343-0722
execdirector@arow-online.org